

Message Text

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S E C R E T MBFR VIENNA 0111

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DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS DEFENSE

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, NATO
SUBJECT: MBFR: BILATERAL DISCUSSION WITH SOVIET REPS OF MARCH
10, 1977

REF: MBFR VIENNA 0110

THE MATERIAL BELOW IS A RECORD OF OTHER POINTS MADE IN THE
MARCH 10 BILATERAL DISCUSSION BETWEEN US REPS AND SOVIET REPS
TARASOV AND SHUSTOV (SEE REFTEL). THIS INFORMATION IS BEING
GIVEN TO FRG AND UK DELEGATIONS ONLY, OT TO OTHER ALLIED
DELEGATIONS. ADDRESSEES ARE REQUESTED TO HOLD THIS INFORMATION
UNDER TIGHT CONTROL.

1. US REP SAID, TO TURN TO ANOTHER SUBJECT, THAT OF THE
EASTERN FEBRUARY 19, 1976 PROPOSAL: WAS HIS ASSUMPTION CORRECT
THAT, UNDER THE EASTERN PROPOSAL OF FEBRUARY 19, 1976, STAGE
ONE ARMAMENT REDUCTIONS BY US AND SOVIET FORCES WOULD COVER
ONLY THE FIVE ARMAMENTS SPECIFIED IN THAT PROPOSAL? TARASOV
SAID THATTHIS WAS CORRECT. THE EAST HAD BELIEVED IN ACROSS-
THE-BOARD REDUCTIONS OF ALL ARMAMENTS AND STILL DID SO. HOWEVER,

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AS A COMPROMISE, IN FORMULATING ITS FEBRUARY 1976 PROPOSAL,
IT HAD MOVED TO THE SPECIFICATION FOR REDUCTION OF THOSE TYPES
OF ARMAMENTS SPECIFICALLY LISTED IN THE PROPOSAL. NATURALLY,
IT WAS EXPECTED THAT THERE WOULD BE LIMITATIONS ON THE
RESIDUAL LEVELS OF THESE ARMAMENTS TO BE REDUCED BY BOTH THE
US AND SOVIET UNION. US REP SAID THIS HAD BEEN CLEAR AND WAS
ONE OBVIOUS DISADVANTAGE OF THE PROPOSAL.

2. US REP ASKED WHAT IMPACT THIS LIMITATION OF ARMAMENT REDUCTIONS TO THE FIVE TYPES SPECIFIED IN THE FEBRUARY 1976 PROPOSAL WOULD HAVE ON THE GENERAL COMMITMENT WHICH THE EAST WISHED NON-US WESTERN DIRECT PARTICIPANTS TO UNDERTAKE IN A FIRST STAGE AGREEMENT REGARDING THEIR STAGE TWO REDUCTIONS? WOULD THE EAST DOP ITS DEMANDS ON THESE PARTICIPANTS AS REGARDS REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS? SHUSTOV EXPLAINED THAT UNDER THE FEBRUARY 19 PROPOSAL, THE EAST ASKED FOR A GENERAL COMMITMENT FROM NON-US WESTERN DIRECT PARTICIPANTS ON THE SCOPE AND TIMING OF THEIR REDUCTIONS. UNDER THE EASTERN UNDERSTANDING OF THE AGREEMENTS REACHED IN THE PREPARATORY TALKS, EACH PARTICIPANT HAD COMMITTED ITSELF TO REDUCE ITS ARMED FORCES AND THEIR ARMAMENTS. HENCE, THE WORD QUOTE SCOPE UNQUOTE IN THE EASTERN FEBRUARY 19 PROPOSAL REFERRED TO A COMMITMENT BY NON-US WESTERN DIRECT PARTICIPANTS TO REDUCE A SPECIFIC PERCENTAGE OF THEIR MILITARY MANPOWER AND ARMAMENTS IN A SECOND PHASE. THIS WAS DISTINGUISHED FROM THE SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS EXPECTED FROM THE US AND SOVIET UNION IN A FIRST AGREEMENT BY THE FACT THAT THE US AND SOVIETS WOULD BE EXPECTED TO LIST THE SPECIFIC TYPES OF ARMAMENTS THAT THEY WOULD REDUCE AND THE NUMBERS INVOLVED. UNDER THE GENERAL COMMITMENT, THE NON-US WESTERN DIRECT PARTICIPANTS WOULD NOT HAVE TO SPECIFY THE PARTICULAR TYPE OF ARMAMENTS INVOLVED NOR THEIR NUMBERS.

3. TARASOV SAID EASTERN PARTICIPANTS WERE WELL AWARE OF WESTERN CRITICISMS THAT THE GENERAL COMMITMENT THE EAST WAS ASKING FOR WAS TOO BROAD. IF WESTERN PARTICIPANTS WISHED TO
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PROPOSE THAT THE NON-US WESTERN DIRECT PARTICIPANTS UNDERTAKE A STAGE ONE COMMITMENT OBLIGATING THEM TO REDUCE ONLY THEIR MILITARY MANPOWER IN STAGE TWO, EASTERN PARTICIPANTS WOULD BE PREPARED TO GIVE THEIR VIEWS ON SUCH A PROPOSAL. HOWEVER, THERE WAS AN ASSOCIATED PROBLEM: AS US REPS WERE WELL AWARE, EASTERN REPS HAD SEVERAL TIMES CRITICIZED THE FACT THAT UNDER THE WESTERN DECEMBER 1975 PROPOSAL, THE US WOULD WITHDRAW NUCLEAR ARMAMENTS BUT THEY COULD BE REPLACED THROUGH INCREASES IN THE STOCKS OF MOST OF THE SAME ARMAMENTS BY THE ALLIES OF THE US, SUCH AS THE FRG. THIS PROBLEM WOULD HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE CONTEXT OF DISCUSSION OF THE CONTENT OF THE GENERAL COMMITMENT BY THE NON-US WESTERN DIRECT PARTICIPANTS. THAT IS, EASTERN VIEWS ON A PROPOSAL TO LIMIT THE GENERAL COMMITMENT TO AN OBLIGATION TO REDUCE MANPOWER IN THE SECOND STAGE WOULD DEPEND ON SEVERAL FACTORS SUCH AS WHETHER THERE WOULD BE A LIMIT ON ARMAMENTS HELD BY THE WEST EUROPEAN AND CANADIAN FORCES OF THE TYPES TO BE LIMITED IN THE FORCES OF THE US AND SOVIETS.

COMMENT: TARASOV'S REMARKS WERE DIRECT. WE REGARD THEM AS

AN ACCURATE REFLECTION OF SOVIET THINKING AT THIS POINT ON
THE SUBJECTS TREATED. RESOR

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